

SEC COMMENTS COLLECTION

SECDocket	2015-06 Northern Pass Transmission - Eversource
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A 45-year resident of Dalton, Coös County, I grew up in Wolfeboro, but I moved here as a young teacher seeking a quality of life better than the Lakes Region, despite its wealth, allows. Since then, the one exception (Berlin-Gorham and its paper mills) has pretty much cleaned itself up. It's nice—so nice that people visit or move here just to experience our region's quality of life. Perhaps we don't advertise it enough south of the Notches, except doing so would threaten the existence of the place we love.

But this treasure of a place is being stolen by outsiders who argue that the proposed power line will spur economic development in Coös, the poorest county in NH. By any metric different from median household income, however, Coös is potentially the wealthiest county, whose location and history have made its people resilient, independent, and innovative. A few loud whiners about poverty in Coös did not grow up here; they came seeking short-term profit and escape from taxes elsewhere. They see a chance to exploit resources that are currently unprotected, enriching themselves, not any "north-country community." The jobs promised by proposed development (including the renovation and expansion of the Balsams by a notorious developer who has failed elsewhere) are either temporary or likely to be filled by people from away, as currently happens at Mountain View Grand Hotel in Whitefield and the Mount Washington Hotel in Bretton Woods.

It is other people from away who will use the power generated in Quebec, then carried inconsiderately through our region—we do not need it. Someone who knows pointed out just yesterday that Northern Pass has become a mere political issue, that decisions will be made according to how money greases the palms of politicians. There is already too much of this in politics, and NH now has a chance to make a difference by example, not only for itself but for the rest of the nation, where individuals' natural rights are threatened by corporate greed.

What we need is protection for Coös County's way of life. Exploitative development has been restricted in other places; it can be restricted here. Over time, the stress of urban life can bring paying customers to this ever-more-valuable region, not because of its grand hotels and gourmet eateries but because of its relatively sparse population, its beautiful natural environment, its unbroken expanses of field, forest, sky, and water—its peace. It is those visitors—ecotourists—who can sustainably support the way of life here. Their dollars will go directly into the pockets of people who take care of them in many small and different ways, ranging from convenience-store service to medical assistance to vehicle maintenance to sustainable hospitality in general—dollars not laundered through mega-corporations whose motive is profit for themselves.

Wrangling over Northern Pass has already lasted too long and gone too far. You have the ability to stop it. If you don't, people from away can never learn for themselves why there has been such wrangling over a project whose supporters see only profit. Coös County and the State of NH will only lose, once the first tower rapes the sky over Coös. You have the ability. Please stop Northern Pass now.

Thank you for seeking my input.

Marion Schafer.

